



LINCOLN CHAFEE

U.S. SENATOR

RHODE ISLAND

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CHAFEE SUBMITS AMENDMENT CALLING FOR AID TO LIBERIA

WASHINGTON, DC – Citing the dire humanitarian situation in Liberia, U.S. Senator Lincoln Chafee submitted an amendment to the proposed Iraq supplemental spending bill today. His amendment calls for \$200 million to be redirected toward humanitarian needs in Liberia.

“It is not too late for the United States to redeem its promise to Liberia,” Chafee said today. “Violence has displaced one-third of the population, half the population is undernourished and there has been no reliable electricity or running water in Monrovia since 1990. With the huge influx of refugees from neighboring countries and the constant strife at home, employment, education and public services have been severely impacted. We owe it to the people of Liberia to step in and make a meaningful commitment to help.”

Senator Chafee’s amendment would shift \$200 million from the Iraq supplemental spending bill to Liberia. It will in no way change the overall size of the supplemental. \$100 million would come from the proposed Emergency Fund for Complex Foreign Crises. The other \$100 million would come from the \$20 billion reconstruction funds under the control of the Department of Defense.

African and European allies (Britain and France in particular) have deployed military, economic and political resources to help stabilize West Africa. The United States has acknowledged there are strong historical and moral reasons for the U.S. to aid Liberia.

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There are also strong security reasons for stabilizing West Africa and preventing potential terrorist havens from cultivating is one. At a time when the United States seeks multi-lateral support for Iraq and Afghanistan, it can ill afford to ignore West Africa. The United States must also lend support to its allies' humanitarian and development efforts in West Africa.

Given the severity of the situation in West Africa, the deployment of U.S. and Economic Community of West Africa Mission in Liberia (ECOMIL) troops to Liberia and the Bush Administration's stated commitment to Africa, this amendment will begin to meet the unmet needs of the Liberian people.